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Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (A/56/624 and A/56/685)

1. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)) introduced the report of the Advisory Committee on the budget for the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for the period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 (A/56/685). As stated in the related report of the Secretary-General (A/56/624), 20 May 2002 had been chosen as the date of independence for East Timor. Accordingly, UNTAET was to be gradually phased out and replaced by a successor mission. The plans for the successor mission were outlined in section IV of the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council on UNTAET (S/2001/983), although precise details had yet to be determined. The Council, in a statement by the President (S/PRST/2001/32), requested the Secretary-General to continue planning and preparation for the successor mission, in consultation with the East Timorese people, and to submit further and more detailed recommendations for the mission. The Advisory Committee noted, in paragraph 49 of its report, that the next report of the Secretary-General would contain the cost estimates and assistance needs of the successor mission. Regarding the proposed budget for UNTAET for the period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002, the Advisory Committee recommended an appropriation of $455 million gross for the operation of UNTAET and an assessment of $402 million gross. It further recommended that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments, without assessment, in the amount of $53 million, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNTAET beyond 31 January 2002. The recommendations were based not only on the proposed budget submitted by the Secretary-General, but also on the Advisory Committee's review of preliminary information on the pattern of expenditure of UNTAET in the period 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. The Secretary-General had requested resources of $592.3 million for that period; the Advisory Committee had recommended an amount of $563 million. In fact, unaudited statements of expenditure provided to ACABQ indicated a balance of unspent resources amounting to $35.4 million. Given the underexpenditure and the fact that UNTAET was to be phased out, the Advisory Committee had been of the view that the amount of $490 million requested for the period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 was high. It was for that reason that it recommended the appropriation of the lower amount of $455 million, including $53 million to be provided on the basis of a commitment authority without assessment.

2. **Ms. Rødsmoen** (Norway) said that Norway was a firm supporter of United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building activities in East Timor and welcomed the recent positive developments, particularly the election of a Constituent Assembly in August 2001, the commencement of the Constitution drafting process and the formation of an all-East Timorese Council of Ministers. The progress made by the working group on post-UNTAET planning and the integrated mission task force at Headquarters was also encouraging.

3. It was vital that UNTAET should be provided with sufficient resources to discharge its complex and wide-ranging mandate. Her delegation therefore welcomed the proposed budget for UNTAET for the period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002. It had taken note of the proposed downsizing of UNTAET personnel and of the consequent reduction in the level of resources. It supported the Secretary-General's plan for an integrated successor mission following East Timorese independence in May 2002, a mission mandated by the Security Council and funded through assessed contributions. In order to ensure a sustainable peace and the establishment of vital institutions, it was crucial that the United Nations should remain in East Timor until such institutions had been placed on a solid footing.

4. A two-day international donor conference for East Timor was currently concluding in Norway. She was pleased to note that bilateral donors remained committed to working with multilateral actors and the East Timorese national authorities towards the reconstruction of the country. Peace-building required comprehensive approaches and long-term commitment. Norway, for its part, stood ready to provide both financial and political assistance to East Timor over the long term, following independence.

5. **Ms. Wahab** (Indonesia) said that her delegation attached great importance to the provision of adequate resources to UNTAET, particularly as it entered its final phase. It therefore welcomed the Advisory

Committee's recommendations. Regarding the plans for a successor mission, Indonesia could support the continuation of a United Nations presence in East Timor, providing that it served the legitimate needs of the East Timorese people. The Secretary-General's report (A/56/624) contained only preliminary plans for such a mission, and her delegation therefore looked forward to the provision of more detailed information in that regard. It was to be hoped that the international donor conference in Norway, at which Indonesia was represented, would yield positive results.

Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/56/660 and A/56/688)

6. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) (A/56/688), said that the proposed budget for the Mission for the period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002, which was contained in document A/56/660, had been submitted too late to allow the Advisory Committee to undertake the detailed examination required for a mission of its size. The Secretariat had faced various operational difficulties, which were described in paragraphs 4 to 6 of the Advisory Committee's report. In order to provide bridge financing for the operation of the Mission, the Advisory Committee recommended the appropriation with assessment of the amount of $193.2 million gross for the period 1 January to 31 March 2002. It would take up the Secretary-General's report (A/56/660) in February 2002, submitting its own report to the Fifth Committee shortly thereafter. The framework within which the Advisory Committee had made its recommendations was outlined in paragraphs 10 to 14 of its report.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.